

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1-27 will have been amended to correct informalities in the claim language and to more clearly define the invention, while not substantially affecting or narrowing the scope of these claims. Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

Furthermore, upon entry of the present amendment, the drawings will have been amended to include the label --Prior Art-- in Figs. 8-10 to indicate that the figures depict that which was known. Corrected formal versions of Figs. 8-10, which incorporate the amendments, are being submitted as part of the present Reply. No new matter has been introduced in the application by the amended drawings.

Applicants note that, with respect to the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed on April 24, 2001, the Examiner "required" Applicants to provide a complete English translation of JP 5-94675, along with their Reply to the Official Action. However, Applicants need only supply an English language abstract for the Examiner to consider a reference cited in an IDS. See, e.g., 37 C.F.R. § 1.98. Accordingly, Applicants have included with this Reply an English language abstract of JP 5-94675 and again request the Examiner to consider and cite the same in the PTO-1449 Form attached to the IDS filed April 24, 2001. Moreover, since the JP document was originally cited in a communication from a foreign Patent Office, consideration is appropriate, based on such citation without any translation.

In the above-referenced Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 12, 21 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) or § 102(b) as being anticipated by VAN MAREN et al. (U.S.

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Patent No. 5,579,516). The Examiner rejected claims 3, 4, 8, 9, 13, 14, 18, 19, 23 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) or § 102(b) as being anticipated by LEONHARDT et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5485,321). The Examiner rejected claims 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) or § 102(b) as being anticipated by CAFFARELLI (EP 0730274 A2). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections, at least for the reasons stated below.

With respect to claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 12, 21 and 22, the Examiner relied on VAN MAREN et al. to teach recording start address information for an unrecorded area existing in a volume space as part of root directory file management information. VAN MAREN et al. disclose a root directory D0 and subdirectories D1 and D2. Each directory includes information control blocks (ICBs) pointing to the directory itself, as well as to associated subdirectories. See col. 4, lines 31-62. However, unlike the present invention as recited in claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 12, 21 and 22, VAN MAREN et al. does not appear to disclose including a start address of an unrecorded area in the root directory. Advantages of including the start address of an unrecorded area include, for example, the ability to search location information of the unrecorded area using only the volume/file structure, as well as the ability to overwrite on the same volume even for a recording medium having restrictions on the number of rewrites.

Accordingly, since VAN MAREN et al. do not disclose each and every element of Applicants' claimed invention, withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C., § 102(a) and § 102(b) based on VAN MAREN et al. is respectfully requested.

With respect to claims 3, 4, 8, 9, 13, 14, 18, 19, 23 and 24, the Examiner relied on col. 12, lines 45-64, of LEONHARDT et al. to teach recording invalid data before and after volume/file

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structure and a data file. However, the cited portion of LEONHARDT et al. only discloses markers that designate the beginning and end of valid data blocks. The Examiner also relied on col. 20, lines 50-56, which only disclose recording scratch data (temporarily saved and subsequently recorded over) on an endless loop of tape. LEONHARDT et al. does not appear to provide any disclosure of recording or otherwise handling invalid data blocks. Furthermore, according to the claimed invention, the invalid extent management information is recorded as part of management information of the root directory. Therefore, location information of the invalid data can be searched using only the volume/file structure.

Accordingly, since LEONHARDT et al. do not disclose each and every element of Applicants' claimed invention, withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C., § 102(a) and § 102(b) based on LEONHARDT et al.. is respectfully requested.

With respect to claims 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25-27, the Examiner relied on col. 15, lines 23-46 of CAFFARELLI to teach recording root directory file management information as main chaining information and reserve chaining information. However, the cited portions of CAFFARELLI do not disclose the multiple sets of chaining information. To the contrary, col. 15, lines 23-46, are directed to a directory structure field 380 that contains a subset of basic information that enables the file system to rapidly determine the relationship between directories and files, and to rapidly access these directories and files without having to chain through file/directory records. The reserve chaining information in the present invention holds the location information of the area to store the main chaining information and the reserve chaining information.

Moreover, the Examiner apparently identified element 505 of Fig. 10 as corresponding to the reserve chaining information area recited in the pending claims. However, whereas the reserve chaining information of the present invention is essentially a duplicate of the main chaining information (see, e.g., page 19, lines 20-24) and enables searching an unrecorded area or new root directory, element 505 of Fig. 10 is merely an attribute flag, indicated as "reserved." In other words, element 505 represents an attribute that is available "if desired for the later addition of other attributes." See col. 14, lines 7-8.

Accordingly, since CAFFARELLI does not disclose each and every element of Applicants' claimed invention, withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C., § 102(a) and § 102(b) based on CAFFARELLI is respectfully requested.

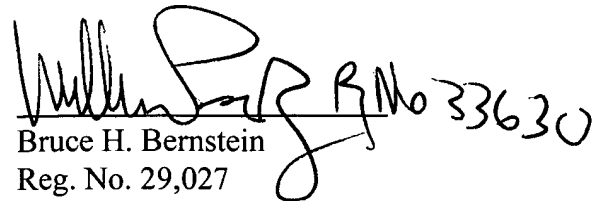
In view of the herein contained amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of previously asserted rejections set forth in the Official Action of May 5, 2003, together with an indication of the allowability of all pending claims, in due course. Such action is respectfully requested and is believed to be appropriate and proper.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this Reply, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attached thereto.

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Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this Reply or the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,  
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September 9, 2003  
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